

November Town Meeting

Agenda

November 27, 2000 7:30 p.m.

Proposal for a reconfiguration of Armory Avenue
At Connecticut Avenue

Leafer Schedule

The leafers are working south of the RR tracks and east of Connecticut Avenue on Tuesdays and north of the RR tracks and west of Connecticut Avenue on Thursdays. Tentative cut-off for the leafers is November 30th. After this date leaves should be bagged for pickup.

Town Hosts Municipal Meeting

On October 19th, the Town hosted the monthly meeting of the Montgomery County Chapter of the Maryland Municipal League. Council Member Bruch gave a brief history of the Armory and its renovation plans. The guest speaker was State Senator Chris Van Hollen who updated the group on the Governor's priorities for the upcoming Maryland General Assembly Session. Council Member Pfautz and Clerk Treasurer McAuley (Chapter Treasurer) were also present. Mayor Raufaste (Chapter President) was out of Town and regrettably unable to attend.

Mayor's Report

Howard Avenue Revitalization

The last week in October, Allfirst Bank and the Prevention of Blindness Society reached an agreement for their shared driveway and parking lot maintenance. The easements have been recorded in the land records by the Town attorney. The fees for this will be reimbursed by the private parties.

The Town and Safeway executed an agreement to permit the Town to electrify the Howard Avenue Quadrant sign on Safeway property.

Metropolitan Avenue

State Highway Administration is finalizing construction easement agreements. This month the Town executed a signed agreement with Mr. Gould for the sidewalk he is permitting the Town to build on the concrete property along the north side of the railroad tracks to the platform. The Mayor held a meeting with State Highway Administration staff and Mr. Kline, a property owner on Metropolitan Avenue, to discuss final plans with him as he still had a few questions. After this meeting he was satisfied with the answers and has signed the construction easement agreements with SHA.

Meetings and Events Attended by the Mayor

She attended a Maryland Mayors' Association Meeting in Washington, D.C.. The Mayors spent the day on Capital Hill with County Executive Duncan and met with Members of Congress.

The Mayor and Council Member Pfautz met with several County representatives and Town citizens to discuss saving the cabin in Kensington Cabin Park. This building is the only one of its kind left in an MNCPPC park. The building is historic; over the last several years many people have been interested in saving the building and resuming a children's summer program. The Mayor sent a letter to Mr. William Hussman, Chairman of the Planning Board, requesting a joint effort be explored to accomplish this endeavor.

Mr. Hussman responded in support of this request and has appointed a staff person to initiate an effort to accomplish our goal.

Last month the Town held a meeting with merchants to discuss ways to market our commercial areas and to encourage new enterprise in Town. The Mayor and Council will have quarterly meetings with the merchants to share ideas. The Mayor feels that this first meeting was a good start. This opens the door to better communication between the Town and the business owners. Kensington Business District Association, the Old Town Merchants Association and the Wheaton Kensington Chamber of Commerce were represented at this meeting. Several merchants who don't belong to any of these organizations also attended. Council Member Pfautz and Clerk Treasurer McAuley also attended.

The Mayor attended a Wheaton Kensington Chamber of Commerce Board meeting this month.

The Mayor attended the Maryland Municipal League Legislative Conference in Hagerstown. She conducted a round table discussion on the recommended legislative issues supported by the Legislative Committee. The four recommendations were adopted by MML at its conference.

The Mayor met with John Thompson, Montgomery County Department of Transportation, to discuss the shared maintenance of Perry Avenue. Based on the discussion, Mr. Thompson is drafting a letter of agreement. This document will help future administrations, both County and Town.

The Mayor and Council Member Leanne Pfautz attended the Kensington Volunteer Fire Department's 75th anniversary celebration this month. Having the fire department with its dedicated volunteers right in the center of our Town is a secure feeling to all who live and work in the Town. "Congratulations" to the Kensington Volunteer Fire Department.

The Mayor and Code Enforcement Officer had several meetings with the representatives of the Kensington Shopping Center resulting in the removal of a fence and asphalt on Town right of way along Howard Avenue. The owners refilled dirt and hydro seeded the right of way. The Town will plant trees in the reclaimed green space. The Town has also issued a building permit to them to enclose their dumpsters along the rear of their property.

The Mayor asked the Housing Opportunities Commission to include benches in the playground on its property. They have agreed to take care of our request as soon as possible.

Thanks to Council Member Chris Tucker and Barry Peoples for leading teams to weed and clean up along the railroad tracks on Community Service day. Thanks to all the great volunteers who helped them. As we have said many times, we have a great volunteer network in our Town.

The Town sends condolences to Lorraine Kennedy at the loss of her husband Frank. A long time resident and active in our Town, Frank will be missed by all of us.

Council Member Bruch's Report

Infrastructure

Due to excessive noise, at 6:40 a.m. on September 28th, Council Member Bruch stopped a Treemasters employee on St. Paul Street from loading large logs onto a truck. Treemasters has been informed of the noise ordinance by Montgomery County Zoning Enforcement and future violations will result in fines. Residents are encouraged to report violations of the noise ordinance, which mandates quiet hours until & 7:00 a.m. weekdays and 9:00 a.m. on weekends.

Mr. Bruch completed draft job descriptions for the Code Enforcement Officer and Office Secretary. All four major positions (Clerk-Treasurer, Director of Public Works, Code Enforcement, and Secretary) should have job descriptions by year-end.

He continues to remove illegal signs from roadside medians and utility poles. Let's keep Kensington beautiful! Thanks to all residents who help remove illegal roadside signs.

Council Member O'Donnell's Report

Budget & Finance

Responding to a resident's complaint, Council Member O'Donnell cleared illegally parked cars from Mitchell Street on October 21st. The cars, parked in a no-parking zone, were threatening safety.

Council Member Pfautz's Report

Traffic & Safety

Traffic Advisory Committee

Meeting

October 23, 2000

Notes

Margo Stanton, Montgomery County Traffic Safety Coordinator from the Maryland Highway Safety Office, met with the committee. She had reviewed the committee's recommendations in advance of the meeting and went through each of them with committee members as noted below. Ms. Stanton told the Committee that the role of the Traffic Safety Coordinator is to work with local committees to identify issues and problems, develop appropriate countermeasures, and implement and advocate for solutions. She said that there is funding available for several of their recommended initiatives.

Enforcement

Ms. Stanton suggested contacting Luther Reynolds to seek more police enforcement of traffic speeds and adherence to street signs. She said she would also contact the County police and advocate for more Kensington involvement. She also suggested that the Town seek the assistance of County police by employing them (on an overtime basis) to help with traffic enforcement. Ms. Stanton mentioned at least one grant program that might help with this expense.

The Traffic Committee discussed with Ms. Stanton its desire to find funding for a SMART to be used on Connecticut Avenue, Plyers Mill Road & Metropolitan Avenue. Ms. Stanton suggested sharing use of a SMART with neighboring municipalities. She said that state funding for such a device was possible. A request should be made for funding for next fiscal year. In the meantime, the Traffic Committee talked about contacting Barnesville, which has just purchased its own SMART and is willing to rent it out to other municipalities.

Traffic Calming

Ms. Stanton suggested that the Town seek professional guidance on street configurations and signage to help in traffic calming. She said that the County Executive had appointed a Blue Ribbon Panel on Traffic Issues. She invited Traffic Committee members to come to Panel meetings and listen to the speakers and experts and perhaps seek consulting services from one of the speakers. Ms. Stanton also suggested talking to County engineers.

Truck Traffic

Ms. Stanton agreed with the direction of the Traffic Committee on this issue. She said that initial and then periodic educational efforts are important and should be undertaken followed by enforcement – perhaps from County police working for the Town on an overtime basis.

Traffic Safety Public Education Campaign

Leanne Pfautz read an excerpt from a letter from State Highway Administration to the Town of Chevy Chase offering sample messages from the State Highway Administration's Communications Division on traffic safety. Ms. Stanton agreed to forward these materials to Leanne for distribution to the Traffic Committee. She suggested getting the Kensington Fire Department involved in disseminating the traffic safety message. The Committee also talked about working with businesses and organizations that have signage opportunities to see whether they would post traffic safety messages. Examples would include Hardware City, Shell Station, Warner Presbyterian Church, Grace Episcopal School, etc. She also mentioned signs are available from DPW with traffic safety messages.

Pedestrian Safety

Leanne Pfautz reported that the Village of Friendship Heights uses signs at its major four-way stop intersections before the pedestrian crosswalk to remind drivers that it is state law for drivers to stop for pedestrians while in the crosswalk. She will follow up with the Village to get more information on these signs.

Other suggestions for improvements for pedestrian safety in Town discussed at the meeting and sent by e-mail after the meeting are as follows:

Request that State re-paint the crosswalk at Metropolitan & St. Paul!! (Ideally, other methods should be installed here to make it safe - blinking yellow light, three-way stop, lighted crosswalk)

Request that State re-paint crosswalks at Knowles & Connecticut Ave. (can we also ask that time for pedestrians to cross be extended slightly?), Knowles & Summit, Plyers Mill and Conn., and Conn. & Perry)

Request a pedestrian crossing sign be placed in middle of street just before crosswalk at the following intersections: Kensington Parkway and Washington Street, Plyers Mill and St. Paul, Plyers Mill and Lexington, Howard Avenue from bank to train station or at crosswalk further down.

Send a notice to Town residents encouraging them to clip hedges, ground cover and shrubs that border sidewalks.

Noise

There was general discussion on the problem of excessively loud car radios. More enforcement is needed. Leanne Pfautz requested samples of municipal legislation from the Maryland Municipal League on this issue and will review and pass these on to Council for consideration.

Council Member Tucker's Report

Parks, Playground, Trees

As part of Community Service Day, Council Member Tucker with citizen Barry Peoples organized a clean up of the right on way on the north side of Howard Avenue west of Connecticut Avenue and the CSX railroad bank area. This was a big undertaking thanks to all the citizens and friends of Kensington who volunteered for this Annual Event.

Staff Report

On October 12th, Clerk Treasurer McAuley and Director of Public Works attended a Workshop on Safety in the Workplace put on by Injured Workers' Insurance fund and Sponsored by the Maryland Municipal League and Maryland Association of Counties.

Concerning the Town's purchase of electric power through an aggregate group sponsored by Montgomery County, Ms. McAuley attended a meeting on November 1st with the supplier and other members of the group (among others the participants include the County, WSSC, Rockville, Gaithersburg, Takoma Park, Montgomery County Schools, Chevy Chase Village).

In Mayor Raufaste's absence, Ms. McAuley attended a meeting held at the Armory on October 25th, sponsored by Montgomery County Department of Economic Development, the Wheaton Kensington Chamber of Commerce and the Town. Representatives from the State and County spoke to area business owners about services and information they could provide to assist in creating a healthy economic environment.

Building Permits Issued

Office remodeling at 3700 Plyers Mill Road

Sign at 3809 Farragut Avenue

Dumpster screening at 10625 Connecticut Avenue

Building and site improvements at 10526 St. Paul Street

Worksession of Mayor & Council

October 2, 2000

Mayor Raufaste, Council Members Bruch, O'Donnell, Pfautz and Tucker, Clerk Treasurer McAuley, and Director of Public Works Joel were present and the following issues were addressed:

Council Member O'Donnell moved to transfer from surplus \$56,000 for curb, gutter, sidewalk and grading improvements to the north side of Plyers Mill Road from Nash Place to Plyers Mill Court. Seconded and passed unanimously with the Mayor concurring.

Council Member O'Donnell moved to approve the Metricom Agreement. Seconded and passed unanimously.

There will be workshops conducted in the near future on Public Information Policy which municipal staff and/or elected officials are encouraged to attend.

Town staff will obtain other municipal ordinances related to tree removal permits.

The company that supplied the new playground equipment in St. Paul Park will be contacted immediately to fix the damaged equipment.

A request for volunteers for the Town Tree Commission will be advertised in the *Town Journal*.

The Project list was reviewed and updated.

The Minutes were reviewed for corrections and additions.

Correspondence was reviewed.

There being no further business, the worksession was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Town Meeting

October 30, 2000

The Meeting was Called to Order at 7:30 p.m. by Mayor Raufaste with Council Members Bruch, O'Donnell, Pfautz, and Tucker, Clerk Treasurer McAuley and Director of Public Works Joel present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Reports were presented by the Mayor, Council, and Building Inspector.

A Town citizen, after reviewing the "Vision for Kensington", expressed concerns over the Town Government's role in reviewing Historic Area Work Permits. The Mayor explained that the Historic Preservation Commission asks the Mayor and Council for their input.

Council Actions

The minutes printed in the October *Town Journal* were unanimously approved.

Council Member Bruch moved to install a "no left turn from 7:00 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. except buses" southbound on Connecticut Avenue at Washington Street. Discussion: the Council will consider extending this restriction to other Town streets if there is a negative impact on other roads due to this action. State Highway Administration will be asked if the restrictive sign can be hung overhead on the pedestrian signal arm. Seconded and passed unanimously with the Mayor concurring.

Council Member O'Donnell moved to accept the Mayor's nominations of Ann Elsbree and Kathleen Quinn to the Tree Commission. Seconded and passed unanimously.

Council Member Bruch moved to accept the Mayor's nomination of Keith Mayhew to the Audit Committee. Seconded and passed unanimously.

Council Member O'Donnell moved to close the meeting to discuss a legal issue. Seconded and passed unanimously.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted.

Pat McAuley, Clerk Treasurer

Contact us at 301-949-2424. Fax 301-949-4925. E-mail at mayor.council@tok.org